



PLANNING BOARD OF MILFORD, MASS.

TOWN HALL, 52 MAIN STREET

634-2317

Joseph Calagione
J. Ted DePaolo
Marble Mainini, III
Jose M. Morais
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September 7, 2023
Alberto Correia, Chairman
Milford Finance Committee
Town Hall, 52 Main Street
Milford, MA 01757


Dear Chairman Correia:

As we mentioned in our April 26, 2023 letter to you, the Planning Board is working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to finalize the scope of work for the 2024 Milford Comprehensive Plan. This work will update the existing plan, which was adopted in 2003. MAPC will be able to begin work in the fall of this year, with the majority of the work to occur throughout calendar year 2024.

The Planning Board wishes to keep the Finance Committee up to date regarding the proposal, and has attached a funding article for the October Special Town Meeting Warrant. The overall cost is \$163,000.00, and we have been awarded a \$60,000.00 Technical Assistance Program Grant that will reduce that overall cost to \$103,000.00.

The Town Planner and I will be happy to present this information at another Finance Committee meeting. Your continued assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,


Joseph A. Calagione, Chairman
Milford Planning Board

ARTICLE 20 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, \$103,000.00 to be utilized by the Planning Board for consultant services associated with the preparation of a 2024 Milford Comprehensive Plan, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Planning Board)



MILFORD SELECT BOARD

Room 11, Town Hall, 52 Main St. (Route 16), Milford, Massachusetts 01757-2679
Phone 508-634-2303 Fax 508-634-2324

Paul A. Mazzuchelli, Chairman
Thomas J. O'Loughlin, Esq.
Michael K. Walsh.

Richard A. Villani
Town Administrator

June 8, 2023

Marc Draisen
Executive Director
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
60 Temple Place
Boston, MA 02111

RE: Technical Assistance Program Award

Dear Director Draisen:

Please accept this letter as acknowledgement of your award of \$60,000.00 in Technical Assistance Program funding for Milford's upcoming 2024 Milford Comprehensive Plan preparation process. This award is greatly appreciated, as it will assure Town Meeting support for the balance of the overall \$163,000.00 cost.

I should also note that the timing of your action will greatly facilitate the Planning Board's ongoing discussions with the Capital Subcommittee of the Finance Committee as they continue to monitor funding sources leading up to the October Special Town Meeting. Receipt of this substantive award will definitely improve the project's funding status in moving through the overall budget process with the Finance Committee.

Again, the Town greatly appreciates the Technical Assistance Program funding award, and we look forward to working with the MAPC planning staff during the preparation of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan for Milford.

If you require additional information, please feel free to contact me at any time. Your continued assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Respectively submitted,

Richard A. Villani, Esq.
Milford Town Administrator

CC: Select Board
Planning Board
Finance Committee
Town Planner

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside the **Town of Milford**. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Larry,

Congratulations! This email officially confirms that Executive Director Marc Draisen has awarded \$60,000 in funding, allocated over two years, to provide technical assistance for Milford's Comprehensive Plan. Mark Racicot and Chris Kuschel, copied here, will be your points of contact on this project.

MAPC technical assistance is made possible through a range of sources including District Local Technical Assistance, Planning for MetroCommon2050 Technical Assistance, federal grants, and foundation grants.

MAPC will work with you to share information about this project to the media and legislators at appropriate times throughout the project. Now that the award is official, members of the MAPC communications team may be in touch to discuss media opportunities. When the timing for press is appropriate, we will be looking for quotes from you and other community leaders related to this grant. We will also be in touch with state representatives and senators, whose support is critical to the funding sources of our Technical Assistance Program.

Hope all is well, and we look forward to working with you on this important project!

Best,
Andrea



► **Andrea Harris-Long, AICP**

Interim Housing Division Manager
Technical Assistance Program Coordinator
aharris-long@mapc.org
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Pronouns: she, her, hers



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Milford Finance Committee – Capital Subcommittee

May 10, 2023

Submission Questions & Responses

Proposal: 2024 Milford Comprehensive Plan

1. What the Need (issue) we are addressing is:

The Planning Board intends to prepare a 2024 Milford Comprehensive Plan. Typically, Comprehensive Plan “updates” are recommended approximately every 10 years. Milford’s current plan was done in 2003. Even though it is a long-range plan with a validity in the 20- to 25-year range, it is now time to prepare a new Comprehensive Plan.

2. How we propose to address it:

Milford is a member community of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and the Planning Board intends to utilize the professional planning services of the MAPC planning staff to prepare the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. You may recall that The Environmental Institute at the Umass-Amherst Graduate Planning Department as well as MAPC were involved in the preparation of the 2003 plan.

3. What alternatives we have:

If the Planning Board does not leverage the Town’s membership to the Technical Assistance Program funding, it will have no other grants available for which its eligible.

4. What steps we have taken (Please list the temp evaluation steps we are taking and that no purchases will be made until we have evaluated them):

The Planning Board is working with MAPC to develop an acceptable scope of work for the plan elements based on the statutory requirements of MGL Ch.41 Sec. 81 D. MAPC should be able to begin work in the fall of this year, with the majority of the work to occur throughout calendar year 2024. Final adoption by the Planning Board would likely occur in early 2025.

5. Background data such as competitive quotes and cut sheets (catalogs) for the items we propose to buy:

As a member of the MAPC, Milford can utilize the planning services of the MAPC directly, so competitive quotes will not be necessary or required. And as a member community we are eligible for their Technical Assistance Program, which would reduce our overall cost. The current overall cost estimate is \$170,000.00. Funds from the Technical Assistance Program could reduce the that by as much as \$50-60,000.00. Initial input from the MAPC staff is that the overall cost may actually come in at less than our original estimate, although that has yet to be finalized.

The Planning Board wanted to make the Finance Committee aware of the proposal, and to put the likelihood of a fall town meeting funding article or the Committee’s radar sooner rather than later. Also, the actual amount of the Technical Assistance Grant may not be known and/or available until after the fall town meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph A. Calagione, Chairman
Milford Planning Board

Larry L. Dunkin, MCRP
Milford Town Planner

SCOPE OF SERVICES - OUTLINE

TOWN OF MILFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1. Interview Boards and Agencies
2. Public Meetings & Citizen Involvement
3. Goals and Policies
4. Existing Land Use
5. Population
6. Services and Facilities
7. Infrastructure
8. Natural and Cultural Resources
9. Open Space and Recreation
10. Housing
11. Economic Development
12. Traffic and Circulation
13. Future Land Use Plan
14. Implementation

Milford Comprehensive Plan

Proposal by Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

April 4, 2023

MAPC has developed the following guiding principles to inform the project scope of work and specific tasks that would be undertaken.

1. Data-driven interdisciplinary approach.

MAPC's competitive edge is through the inherent structure of our agency. MAPC's planning expertise covers both traditional planning topics like land use, transportation, economic development, housing, and environment, while also having subject matter experts in cross-cutting planning areas like clean energy and climate change, arts and culture, public health, and equity. MAPC's planning work is supported by a robust Data Services department, equipped with GIS and data expertise. The in-house expertise will be leveraged for the Comprehensive Plan, in that we would create a strategic interdisciplinary project team to work on all aspects of the project, from existing conditions analysis and community engagement to development of goals, strategies, and actions. Throughout the project, the MAPC team would hold internal workshops to review existing conditions and identify opportunities to connect the different elemental goals, strategies, and actions. Team members' extensive project portfolios will provide a basis for generating ideas and content for the Comprehensive Plan. The team would follow a data-driven approach, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. In particular, MAPC has honed our expertise in qualitative data and is well-versed in collecting this data through public engagement events (e.g., surveys, focus groups, forums, etc.) and using it to inform goals, strategies, and actions in a meaningful way. This holistic approach to data-driven planning will ensure Town objectives, like ensuring the Comprehensive Plan fairly reflects the community and includes a realistic implementation strategy, are met. Lastly, throughout all planning areas, MAPC team members apply a lens of sustainability and equity. This will be evident as existing conditions are analyzed and presented to the public, Comprehensive Plan steering committee, and Town boards. Goals, strategies, and actions that advance sustainability and equity goals for the Town will be at the forefront of discussions.

2. Community-centered planning.

MAPC's Community Engagement experts will serve on the project team and lead the development of a meaningful engagement strategy that incorporates a mix of different engagement techniques and strategies, including in-person, hybrid, and remote opportunities to meet residents where they are. MAPC's approach to engagement is first understanding a community's demographics and working with local stakeholders to identify those groups or individuals who may have been underrepresented historically in public processes. Doing this helps ensure engagement is inclusive, equitable, and accessible. In addition to leveraging the State's Environmental Justice data, MAPC is developing additional data and maps to demonstrate block groups within these communities that have high percentages of minority population and/or low household income, but are considered below the state's EJ thresholds. This additional data and analysis will allow communities to be more comprehensive and thoughtful in prioritizing and engaging with community stakeholders, particularly those who are more susceptible or vulnerable to the impacts of

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climate change. We see opportunities to try new ideas with the Milford Comprehensive Plan, like including youth engagement events since they will become local leaders in the coming decades. We will work with the Town to ensure inclusive communications to foster an open and transparent planning process where residents feel welcome and heard. MAPC also sees the importance of public education as residents are engaged in planning processes and will develop strategic communication materials to accompany engagement events at every step of the process. Lastly, MAPC values the role of municipal leaders in a community and will identify specific engagement opportunities to hear from the Town staff, boards, and committees who will be charged with implementing the Comprehensive Plan. This will help ensure the implementation strategy is realistic and grounded in financial feasibility.

3. Realistic and cost-effective implementation.

Good planning is lost without realistic expectations for implementation. MAPC has a history of not only creating plans but helping communities implement them. We will keep realism and cost efficiency at the forefront when proposing implementation actions for the Town. This will be accomplished in a few different ways:

Existing conditions grounded in reliable data to inform best practices and case studies – We propose extending the “context communities” concept often employed in housing production plans to the Milford Comprehensive Plan update. This will deepen the understanding of local conditions and provide an extensive directory of existing policy interventions and opportunities from similarly sized communities (with similar challenges and opportunities) that are available to the Town to implement goals and strategies. At the onset of the project, we will identify 5-7 context communities that will serve as a benchmark for Milford. As trends and key findings emerge in the existing conditions analysis, we can look to the context communities and others for best practices, examples, and case studies to inform and guide Milford’s implementation actions. This analysis may also help us understand the regional housing and job market conditions that affect Milford and influence the success of different implementation options.

Face community challenges head-on – MAPC will work with the Comprehensive Plan Committee to identify potential community challenges that will likely be front and center of public conversations as the Comprehensive Plan proceeds. Some of these challenges may include access to housing choices, particularly Affordable housing, impacts from climate change, water quality concerns stemming from stormwater, wastewater, and other water resources, changing Town demographics, and Milford’s continued desirability as a place to live, work, and spend time. MAPC embraces community challenges and anticipates facing these head-on during the Comprehensive planning process. To do this, we will facilitate conversations with the public and local officials to identify ways to address challenges and move forward over the coming decades. This approach will guide the implementation plan and ensure it is grounded in the community.

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Prioritize actions to accomplish goals and objectives – We see opportunities to create an implementation strategy that identifies short-term, mid-term, and long-term priorities. Prioritizing actions will help Town staff, boards, and committees integrate the Comprehensive Plan into annual workplans and result in more immediate implementation.

Our approach will result in a planning process that is open, inclusive, and transparent, and a Comprehensive plan that reflects the vision of Milford residents. The resulting plan will have great utility to community leaders, adding value beyond independent plans. It will also be user-friendly and digestible to the public. The process and tasks described below have been successful in other Comprehensive plan processes MAPC has facilitated. These can all be refined depending on the specific needs of Milford.

4. Regional Collaboration through a Spatial Lens

MAPC would employ a spatialized approach to the Comprehensive Plan that will consider the Town's role at not only the local scale, but also how Milford works with neighboring cities and towns as a member of the SouthWest Advisory Planning subregion. The Comprehensive Plan will also consider Milford's role in the Greater Boston region. Considering these different spatial scales will better inform land use, housing, economic development, transportation, and other goals, strategies, and actions. Creating a spatial representation of the Comprehensive Plan, showing how Milford's commercial centers and growth patterns connect to other parts of the region, will also help residents connect local policy decisions to larger shared goals and objectives. The spatial approach will also be useful in conveying complex Comprehensive Plan topics to the public during engagement events. This approach to spatially and graphically represent comprehensive plan ideas greatly improves the ability to effectively communicate and maintain interest in the content of the plan.

5. Sustainable Growth Patterns

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to facilitate a public discussion around how Milford should plan for future growth. The Plan's goals, strategies, and actions should provide a framework for future land use decisions, from future zoning bylaw amendments to development review. As we work on the different plan elements, we will follow smart growth principles to ensure future growth is sustainable and equitable. We will facilitate conversations around how to maximize existing public facilities and infrastructure, expand housing and job options near transit-rich areas to decrease reliance on single-occupant vehicle trips, increase multimodal transportation, and preserve open spaces and natural resources (including water). We will engage residents with varying backgrounds and lived experiences to help ensure the goals, strategies, and actions support equitable growth and development principles.

Project Work Plan

PROCESS

MAPC will work closely with Town staff, a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and the Planning Board to carry out the phased planning process detailed below, including robust public engagement. The Comprehensive Plan committee will review existing conditions and recommend narrative chapters and draft goals, strategies, and implementation actions to the Planning Board. The committee's recommendation will consider public input received from different stages of the project. MAPC will work with the Committee to find ways to reach groups who have not traditionally been active or represented in planning processes in Milford. These groups could include younger residents, residents with lower incomes, renters, people of color, veterans, and/or seniors. MAPC and the Committee will work to meet these community members where they are and provide space for them to feel empowered to participate. This inclusive process will ensure the Comprehensive Plan represents the community at large and meets the needs of current and future residents.

Town Planner. Milford's Town Planner will serve as MAPC's primary contact with the Town throughout the process. MAPC would expect this staff member to assist in the coordination and scheduling of meetings with Town staff, Boards, and Committees and the Comprehensive Plan Committee. While MAPC can provide support, the Town will be responsible for seeking and identifying Comprehensive Plan Committee members. The Town Planner will also help provide any previous studies, Town data, or other sources of information that may be helpful to the Comprehensive plan process. The Town Planner will contribute to the outreach efforts to engage a diverse and inclusive cross-section of the community including serving as a connection to local groups and leaders, coordinating with local cable TV for coverage at events, securing appropriate venues for events, and coordinating with promotion of events through Town communication channels including the Town website. The Town Planner should plan to attend most if not all Comprehensive plan related meetings, particularly committee meetings, check-ins with Boards, and community meetings. Based on the format and attendance of meetings, the Town Planner and Committee members may be asked to perform a role during meetings such as provide a welcome and introduction, facilitate a small group discussion, or take notes. The Town Planner should also anticipate providing review and comment on draft materials throughout the process.

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Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. MAPC recommends establishing a Comprehensive Plan Steering (or Advisory) Committee to meet with and guide the work of MAPC throughout this process. In our experience, this committee gives the Planning Board freedom to participate as they are able, but places less of an impact on the regular Planning Board meetings and full agendas. The best Steering Committees represent diverse stakeholders and viewpoints across the Town and should include liaisons from the Planning Board, and potentially the Select Board, DPW, Conservation Commission, or others.

Planning Board Engagement. As the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee reviews existing conditions during Phase I, draft element narratives will be presented to Planning Board for additional input and refinement prior to moving to Phase II. This engagement will increase the Planning Board's interest and buy-in to the Comprehensive Plan process, as they are one of the key implementing bodies and are the authority to approve the Comprehensive Plan. Early investment and participation in the Comprehensive Plan will ideally result in more successful implementation once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted. During Phase II, 2-3 meetings will be held with the Planning Board to review goals, strategies, and implementation actions prior to finalizing the Comprehensive Plan for public review.

Strategic Community Involvement. MAPC is committed to inclusive, equitable engagement and will employ a variety of outreach techniques to reach Milford residents throughout Phase I and Phase II. To kick off Phase I, MAPC's Community Engagement Department will work with Town staff and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to develop a **community outreach and engagement strategy**. The strategy will be flexible and adaptable as dynamics, opportunities, and challenges change throughout the process. It will include the purpose and goals of engagement; stakeholder analysis; outreach and engagement tools and resources; a description of methods to collect, analyze, and incorporate community input; and specific strategies and activities to reach and engage different groups. The parties and partners responsible for executing the engagement strategy will vary, based on activity.

All Milford residents will be invited to participate in the planning process, though some engagement activities may be focused on groups who have been historically marginalized and underrepresented in previous planning processes. These may include but are not limited to renters, residents with lower incomes, people of color, and youth. To broaden outreach efforts, partnerships with on-the-ground community organizations will be included in the outreach strategy and pursued, with support from Town staff and Steering Committee members.

A **hybrid approach to engagement** will provide opportunities that vary in scale, setting, and format (digital vs. in-person). MAPC can offer activities ranging from smaller scale in-person or virtual focus groups to surveys to virtual forums and larger in-person events (assuming that public health circumstances allow). MAPC may also leverage existing Town-wide events and work with community partners to incorporate Comprehensive Plan educational and engagement opportunities in meetings and events held by local groups. As Comprehensive Plan materials are ready for public review, MAPC may also coordinate virtual office hour sessions for community members to drop in and ask questions (such details will be worked out during discussions with the Steering Committee regarding the details of the Community Engagement Plan).

In addition to the varied smaller scale activities, MAPC can organize Town-wide engagement campaigns that may be public forums, online open houses, workshops, or some combination of these and other formats focused on:

- Community Visioning
- Existing Conditions – Key Findings, Challenges, and Opportunities

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- Recommendations
- Implementation

MAPC will practice “full circle communication principles,” as it is critical when gathering public input to report back to the community about what was heard during major engagement initiatives. This will create trust in the process and build buy-in for the plan. The community will know that they have been heard and understood. The feedback loop will be created via the project website, newsletters, presentations at engagement events, and other means. Final deliverables will include a summary of key themes that emerged from community engagement and how input informed the final Milford Comprehensive Plan.

PHASE I - EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS AND VISIONING

Below is a suggested breakdown of tasks to lead for the Comprehensive plan process and deliverable. The actual tasks as well as the elements included would be refined based upon the Town’s needs.

Task 1 - Establishing the Foundation

Subtask A. Study and Data Collection. The first step of the planning process will be a **review of recent Town studies, analyses, and projects**. MAPC will also review relevant regional planning studies, including MetroCommon2050 for opportunities to connect regional and local planning priorities. This is an important step as a variety of studies and plans have been developed in the Town which may inform the Comprehensive Plan. The MAPC team will identify common themes across the various plans in an effort to be efficient and not “reinvent the wheel.” The project team will also strategize how to incorporate past plans and studies across all of the Plan elements to maintain an interdisciplinary planning approach. The Town will be asked to share any documents, data, or information that could be relevant to the plan process.

Subtask B. Comprehensive Plan Committee Support. MAPC recommends establishing a **Comprehensive Plan Committee** who can work closely with the Planning Board as the planning process unfolds. The Committee should be diverse in its composition and reflect different views, perspectives, and lived experiences. Different demographic groups should be represented, as well as different areas of town and length of time as residents. The Committee will review planning documents and recommend element chapter narrative and goals, strategies, and actions to the Planning Board. The Committee will be an active participant in public engagement activities. Some committee members may be asked to help lead or facilitate engagement events to expand engagement capacity and broaden overall public reach. Ideally, the Committee would include representation from major boards as well, including the Planning Board, Select Board, or others relevant to the Comprehensive plan. A broader call for committee members and their selection will be performed by the Town. Depending on the timing, MAPC can provide support for these activities.

Subtask C. Town Tour. The project team will schedule a **Town tour**, ideally after the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee has been formed. Town staff will prepare an itinerary for the tour that includes notable landmarks such as key public facilities, cultural resources, open space and recreation sites, neighborhood centers, and other notable areas. Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee members will be invited to participate in the tour.

Subtask D. Municipal Immersion Day. MAPC will work with the Town to organize a **“municipal immersion day”** where key Town staff and board/committee members will meet with MAPC staff to familiarize MAPC with key issues and opportunities. These meetings will also be an opportunity for Town officials to share what has been implemented recently and what barriers to implementation have existed in the past. This will help inform future discussions about realistic and cost-effective implementation strategies.

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Subtask E. Community Engagement Plan. To direct and guide effective engagement with the community across the duration of this planning process a specific plan must be outlined. The **Community Engagement Plan** will further define the community engagement efforts outlined in this project approach including an initial demographic and stakeholder analysis. The Community Engagement Plan will provide an outline for engagement throughout the Comprehensive plan process that can be amended and adapted to the needs of the project as it progresses.

Subtask F. Project Communications. To support a robust public engagement strategy, MAPC will develop **project branding and a logo** that will be used throughout all Comprehensive Plan initiatives and activities. This will ensure recognition of education and outreach materials as part of a cohesive planning process. A **project website** will be developed to provide a one-stop source for Comprehensive Plan updates. The website will ensure full-circle communication and public access to project materials throughout the process. MAPC's project team will regularly provide content for the project website, which may be hosted by the Town or MAPC (but preferably by the town, so that the site can exist during the future implementation stages of the Comprehensive Plan).

Task 2 - Identifying Existing Patterns

Subtask A. Initial Research and Analysis. The MAPC project team will become familiar with existing conditions in Milford. Team members will undertake **initial research** regarding local and regional trends relevant to the Comprehensive Plan, including demographics, the economy, housing data, climate vulnerability, transportation patterns, and the environment. To contextualize Milford trends against similar communities, MAPC will employ the

"context communities" methodology by identifying 5-7 context communities that will serve as a benchmark for the Town. The project team will work with Town staff to identify key data indicators that would benefit from community comparison. This information will be included in trends and key findings that emerge in the existing conditions analysis. This approach will help focus future conversations around best practices, examples, and case studies to inform and guide goals, strategies, and implementation actions. Existing conditions and patterns in the Town will be analyzed across each of the Comprehensive plan topics.

Subtask B. Internal Work Session. Once the MAPC project team has undertaken initial research and identifying key findings and trends, an **internal project team work session** will be scheduled to share information and identify opportunities to connect findings and trends across topic areas. By deliberately building these collaborative work sessions into the process, the Comprehensive plan will be developed to identify synergies and opportunities for collaboration across topics and disciplines. This approach will result in stronger Comprehensive plan content across all topics and will particularly benefit cross-cutting themes such as sustainability and equity.

Subtask C. Community Awareness Campaign. As the foundations of the planning process are established, MAPC will design a **postcard and poster campaign** to share information about the Comprehensive Plan process. These early promotional materials can include eye-catching facts from existing conditions review and encourage participation in the planning process. Materials will be equipped with QR codes that link to the project website for consistent, timely information.

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Task 3 - Community Visioning

Subtask A. Community Workshop. **What do residents envision for Milford over the coming decades?** MAPC will facilitate an **interactive visioning forum** with the community to guide the overall planning process. The forum will be an opportunity for the community to establish values to guide the overall planning process. To kick off the Visioning process, MAPC will present a basic overview of Milford existing conditions: its location, history, demographic overview (current and projected), community assets, government structure, basic land use, and zoning. Information about local and regional trends and previously stated goals, priorities, and action steps from previous plans will also be shared in a compelling manner to engage and educate residents about the planning process. Participants will be able to evaluate existing conditions and previous goals and priorities and provide feedback on what is still relevant and what may need to be added or removed.

Subtask B. Follow-up Survey. Following the visioning forum, a survey will be released to gather additional feedback. The survey may be designed as an **online open house with built-in survey questions** to allow those who could not attend the forum an opportunity to view the information shared about the Comprehensive plan topics. This survey design allows participants to dive into Comprehensive plan topics based on their level of interest. They can take the survey having read the background information or not. Feedback gathered through the survey will inform the community vision. The survey will be promoted throughout the Town, and ideally, this will expand the number of residents participating in the planning process.

Subtask C. Compilation and Analysis. All of the **quantitative and qualitative data** gathered at the Community Workshop, Survey, and any Neighborhood Workshops will be compiled and analyzed. The engagement questions and exercises across each of these events will be coordinated to facilitate the compilation and analysis of this data. This compilation and analysis of the community's feedback will form the foundation for defining a vision and recommendations of the Comprehensive plan.

Subtask D. Internal Work Session. Once the MAPC project team has compiled community feedback, a second **internal MAPC work session** will be scheduled to share information and consider interdisciplinary draft goals, strategies, and actions.

Task 4 - Defining a Vision and Direction

Subtask A. Draft Vision Statement. MAPC will collect and analyze public input provided through the public process and create a summary vision and values to guide all plan elements and goals, strategies, and actions. Developing the vision and values will be an iterative process with the community, Comprehensive Plan Committee, and Planning Board. MAPC will provide opportunities for the public to comment on the draft vision and values before finalizing them with the Committee. The final vision and values will be visible on the project web page and other communication materials to keep these centered in the planning process.

Subtask B. Topic Briefing Summaries. Grounded in the research and data collection (including public feedback) occurring in tasks 3 and 4, the project team will prepare existing condition narratives for the following policy topic areas, in accordance with chapter 41, Section 81D (Massachusetts law guiding Comprehensive plans).

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LAND USE

This element narrative of the Comprehensive Plan will include desired development patterns for each land use and location in Milford, based on public feedback gathered throughout the Visioning process, analysis of existing conditions, and past planning processes. The section will identify the distribution of existing uses and specify locations for new (or re-developed) residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use growth and areas to be protected as open space (both passive and active recreation and conservation) and/or to be developed as public recreational facilities (either active or passive). This section will specifically address sustainable land use practices and how the built environment and development patterns impact climate change.

This section will include an existing land use map, population totals, and housing and growth projections. An analysis of the existing zoning, accompanied by the zoning map, will demonstrate the types of development that can occur under current regulatory conditions and opportunities for zoning reform that could help inform goals, strategies, and actions. The zoning analysis will be framed by sustainability best practices – both environmental and fiscal – and evaluation of land use tools such mixed-use and other smart growth development principles, all which work to advance sustainable development.

A future land use conceptual map will be created to graphically show the vision for the Town's future. The map will identify areas where sustainable growth may occur (or where re-development could occur), how residents can move around and to/from Milford, locations of community asset clusters, areas targeted for preservation, and where implementation actions will have the most impact. This spatial display could later serve as a visual summary of the Comprehensive Plan that would be easy to share with residents and other stakeholders.



HOUSING

Housing policy and regulatory changes will be discussed as opportunities to meet Milford's current and future housing needs and ensure a balance of local housing opportunities exist for all residents. Recommendations will ensure housing goals, strategies, and actions complement other policy objectives. The plan will include strategies to provide a greater mix of housing types, at varying income levels, to ultimately help the Town meet its housing needs; note that although Milford is not an MBTA community and does not therefore need to comply with the new MBTA Communities Section 3A requirements, the Comprehensive Plan should still address how to meet the future housing needs of its residents.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The existing conditions analysis will use updated data to review the Town's economic status, employment base, and trends in retail and commercial uses to anticipate future market drivers and how those might impact the Town's commercial areas. A review of past plans and strategies and existing economic resources will inform the types of programs and policies that would be effective in growing Milford's local economy and offering job opportunities for current and future residents. An analysis of existing and potential economic and development incentives will be discussed and will inform goals, strategies, and actions. Sustainability and equity considerations for this element may include strategies for attracting and expanding emerging "green" industries that promote environmental sustainability, encouraging sustainable siting and construction of new facilities, and expanding access to Milford jobs through strategically locating job centers in smart growth locations.

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TRANSPORTATION, CIRCULATION, AND TRANSIT

The Transportation element will analyze the Town's current and proposed future transportation system, focusing on major streets, public transportation, pedestrian circulation, bicycle infrastructure, parking, and integration of Complete Streets. This section will include:

- Major streets with capacities and historic/current traffic volumes (vehicular, and where available pedestrian/bicycle), based on existing local or MassDOT data and traffic reports;
- An analysis of overall commuting traffic patterns; and
- Identification and assessment of congestion and safety problems that exist.

Based on this baseline data, strategies for how to improve the overall safety of all modes of transport will be considered. The element will also include an analysis of how to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips, to reduce traffic congestion, as well as achieve improved climate, sustainability, and public health outcomes. This process will assess the infrastructure for more sustainable transportation modes, including pedestrian and bicycle routes and facilities, park-and-ride lots, public transit, micro-mobility, etc. Recommendations to enhance these travel modes will be included. The existing conditions analysis can also inform a prioritization of transportation improvements to guide the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy and identify transportation investments that will best advance community goals across all policy areas.



CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

This element will review the Town's inventory of cultural and historic resources. A variety of data sources will be used to get a broad understanding of the cultural assets in Milford. Cultural assets could include more traditional historic sites and landmarks, like those identified in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), but also community gathering spots and artist spaces. The latter are less formally documented; feedback from public engagement events will help generate a comprehensive list of cultural assets. A review of existing tools in place to protect and enhance these resources will be included, and policies and programs will be identified to strengthen local history and culture. The element will also assess the risks to existing historic resources, ranging from risks posed by climate change and natural disasters to development risk as growth occurs. Goals, strategies, and actions can hone in on ways to protect and enhance existing resources and ensure they are sustainable into the future. Equitable access to Milford's cultural assets will also be discussed.



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE

MAPC often proposes combining the Natural Resources and Open Space and Recreation sections into one element that will complement the Town's existing Open Space and Recreation Plan (or feed into a future OSRP) and analyze the existing inventory of natural resources. An analysis of existing environmental conditions, from stormwater management to water quality, will be included to provide a complete understanding of Milford's natural environment. Where available, data for future climate projections, such as changes in temperatures, precipitation, and stream-flow, will also be considered. Opportunities for improving access to open spaces, advancing resiliency to climate change and other natural hazards, and preserving natural resources will be included in the assessment. Sustainability will be at the forefront of this element, as natural resources, when managed effectively, are a key component of community resiliency. The element will review current regulations that work to improve environmental outcomes and offer policies and programs to ensure new development, public infrastructure projects, and other activities occur in a sustainable manner that protects and enhances Milford's natural environment. The team will also review and reference the Town's environmental and resiliency planning efforts. When drafting goals, strategies, and actions the team will prioritize equity and seek to identify approaches that support Milford's Environmental Justice and climate vulnerable populations. This element will complement the Land

PROJECT APPROACH

Use, Housing, and Transportation goals and provide opportunities for interdisciplinary policy-making to achieve sustainable community objectives.



COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

This element will inventory public facilities, infrastructure, and services including the Town's water system, sewer system, stormwater drainage, emergency services (e.g., fire and police), municipal offices, schools, and other community facilities. The element will intersect with the Transportation element to assess public roads and multimodal facilities. When inventorying the public facilities, the element will apply a sustainability and equity lens, focusing on how sustainable and resilient existing facilities are, as well as how accessible they are to the general public and particularly historically under-served residents. Recommendations on how to coordinate land use and transportation decisions to capital improvement planning will be included. This will also include maintenance of existing essential services and planning for future population and job growth, as well as limitations of municipal infrastructure to support future growth. The element will help Milford prioritize future capital investments, with those of highest priority likely being included in the implementation strategy.

MAPC's expertise in municipal governance will provide value to this element, through consideration of public service provisions and local decision-making, alongside the objectives, practices, and regulations of the Milford boards and commissions. Milford's voluntary elected and appointed boards are a critical part of the Town's ability to meet the needs of residents and implement the Comprehensive Plan. Ensuring these boards and committees are structured, resourced, and supported is essential to effective operation. Equally important, this section will assess the strengths and challenges of civic engagement in Milford to support recommendations that expand and diversify community involvement. This governance review will evaluate how the existing governance models are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and opportunities for improvement to advance successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.



PUBLIC HEALTH AND LIVABILITY

Although not found in all Comprehensive plans, MAPC recommends integrating Public Health into the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that community "livability" and well-being is incorporated as a metric for municipal programs, services, and spending. Much like sustainability and equity, MAPC would integrate public health considerations throughout each of the Comprehensive Plan elements. Existing conditions will be presented through a public health lens to inform goals, strategies, and actions that can promote positive health outcomes for current and future Milford residents. An analysis of health disparities in Milford, performed by MAPC's Public Health team, will also provide valuable context for goal setting and implementation prioritization. With this approach, all elements of the Comprehensive Plan will be examined for how policies can support people of all abilities, ages, backgrounds, incomes, and circumstances in their pursuit to have safe and healthy lives in Milford.

PROJECT APPROACH

PHASE II - GOAL SETTING AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Task 1 - Defining Draft Goals

Subtask A. Internal Work Session. MAPC will hold **interdisciplinary MAPC work sessions** internally to brainstorm initial draft goals that are consistent with the findings of Phase I.

Subtask B. Initial Draft Goals. Milford Comprehensive Plan **draft recommendations** will be informed by:

- Community-led vision, values, and goals
- Element existing conditions, including qualitative and quantitative data analysis
- Recommendations from prior plans reviewed with the public and Steering Committee as part of this process, including gaps in these recommendations and any need to reconcile conflicts across recommendations.
- Discussion, review, and comments by the Comprehensive Plan Committee and the Planning Board.

Subtask C. Community Workshop. MAPC will facilitate an **interactive forum/event** to gather feedback on the initial draft goals with the community. Participants will be able to evaluate initial draft goals and provide feedback on what may need to be edited, added, or removed. The details of this event (e.g., public forum or participation in a major public event) would be worked out depending upon the schedule in the Public Engagement Plan.

Subtask D. Community-wide Survey. In addition to the community workshop to gather feedback on the initial draft goals, a second **community-wide survey** will expand the reach and number of participants able to evaluate initial draft goals and provide feedback on what may need to be edited, added, or removed.

Task 2 - Refining Goals

Subtask A. Refining Draft Goals. The feedback gathered on the initial draft goals at the community workshop and community-wide survey will be compiled and analyzed for patterns. The **draft goals will be refined** based on the patterns of this community-wide feedback.

Subtask B. Community Awareness Campaign. As the planning process advances, MAPC will design a **postcard and poster campaign** to share information about the Comprehensive Plan process. This round of promotional materials can include eye-catching quotes from draft goals and encourage participation in the planning process. Materials will be equipped with QR codes that link to the project website for consistent, timely information.

Subtask C. Finalize Draft Goals. After integrating the feedback received on the initial draft and refined draft goals, the **draft goals will be finalized** prior to advancing to the drafting of strategies and actions that will define how to advance the Town's vision and goals.

Subtask D. Spatialize Goals. Based on the previously defined neighborhood areas, the **goals will be geographically filtered** to define which Town-wide goals would be most applicable and relevant to specific neighborhood areas/zoning districts of the Town to better align them spatially with the needs of the Town and provide clearer direction for goals, strategies, and actions.

PROJECT APPROACH

Task 3 - Defining Strategies and Actions

Subtask A. Internal Work Session. MAPC will hold **interdisciplinary MAPC work sessions** internally to craft complementary goals, strategies, and actions.

Subtask B. Initial Draft Strategies and Actions. Plan recommendations will be **action-oriented and intersectional** in nature. Cross-cutting topics like sustainability, equity, and public health may be represented in all topical recommendations. The recommendations will reflect key opportunities for Milford to advance shared community goals and provide a framework for how departments and boards/committees can work together to address complex municipal challenges. The recommendations will work to make Milford more sustainable, more environmentally and fiscally, healthy, and equitable. Recommendations will be presented to the public for feedback before being finalized and recommended by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and Planning Board.

Subtask C. Implementation Approach Outline. An **implementation plan** will be informed by the public, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and Planning Board. MAPC will hold interdisciplinary work sessions internally to strategize how implementation action items may be broken into short-term priorities, mid-term priorities, and long-term priorities. Prioritizing implementation as a multi-phased plan will ensure the strategy is realistic and considers the level of urgency of specific issues, such as addressing climate resiliency, community resiliency, or mobility against the potential impact of implementation actions. Resources needed to advance implementation items will be highlighted, as well as the Town departments, agencies, or other parties who will take the lead on implementation. To reinforce local and regional collaboration, potential partners in implementation will also be identified (e.g., community partners, state agencies, private sector, etc.).

Subtask D. Municipal Immersion Day. MAPC will work again with the Town to organize a second “**municipal immersion day**” where key Town staff and board/committee members will meet with MAPC staff to review and discuss draft strategies and actions and the implementation approach. This is an important check point to refine implementation details that are realistic and achievable while building buy-in with implementers.

Task 4 - Compiling a Plan

Subtask A. Draft Plan and Layout. The final deliverable of the Milford Comprehensive Plan process will be a concise, yet comprehensive and visually appealing plan organized into the following sections. Additional sections deemed necessary and important through the planning process may be added. Cross-cutting topics such as sustainability, equity, and public health will be integrated through each of the plan sections.

- Introduction: Milford, Now and Into the Future
- Values, Vision, and Goals for the Future
- Land Use Goals, Strategies, and Actions
- Housing Goals, Strategies, and Actions
- Economic Development Goals, Strategies, and Actions
- Transportation, Circulation, and Transit Goals, Strategies, and Actions
- Cultural and Historical Resources Goals, Strategies, and Actions
- Natural Environment and Open Space Goals, Strategies, and Actions
- Community Services and Facilities Goals, Strategies, and Actions
- Implementation Action Strategy
- Appendices (Existing Conditions and Community Input Summary)

PROJECT APPROACH

Subtask B. Internal Plan Review and Comment. The draft plan will be provided for review by the Comprehensive Plan Committee, Planning Board, and Town staff. This internal plan review and comment will provide a useful internal check of the information and presentation of that information in the draft document prior to broader release for review and comment by the community.

Task 5 - Defining Priorities

Subtask A. Defining Cross-cutting Themes. Near the end of this detailed, broad-ranging and comprehensive process, it is important to step back to define and highlight cross-cutting themes and important conclusions. These reflections will be based on the full draft content of the draft Comprehensive plan and will assist in the drafting of an executive summary and providing a meaningful summary presentation to the community at the Final Community Forum.

Subtask B. Drafting Executive Summary. In addition to the final plan, MAPC will produce an independent and visually appealing executive summary that will graphically and spatially illustrate the vision, key goals, and implementation strategies of the full plan. It will be designed to both augment and serve as a stand-alone document to the full plan, making it more accessible to Milford residents. The format of the executive summary may be a pamphlet, booklet, or a series of posters, based on input from Town staff, the Steering Committee, and Planning Board.

Subtask C. Final Community Forum. MAPC will facilitate a final community forum to present the draft Comprehensive plan with a focus on the overall vision, cross-cutting themes, and approach to implementation. The final community forum will also be the release event for the draft Comprehensive plan document to the community and begin a community comment period.

Subtask D. Community Comment Period. The draft Comprehensive plan document will be available for community comment for a period of time determined with the Town. Typically, the community comment period is between 30 and 45 days. The comments gathered during this comment period will be analyzed and integrated into the Comprehensive plan document as appropriate.

Subtask E. Finalize Plan. The draft Comprehensive plan will be finalized and provided to the Town digitally.

Project Schedule

MAPC’s would propose to start the Milford Comprehensive Plan process in the fall/winter of 2023, and continue throughout 2024, with a plan completion in early 2025. This schedule will enable the Town to seek additional funds from other sources (e.g., MAPC Technical Assistance Program) in order to fund the entire proposed Comprehensive Plan process.

Steering Committee meetings are projected to occur as needed throughout the planning process (usually monthly or every-other-month, depending upon the phase of work). Check-ins with the Planning Board, Select Board, and Steering Committee are projected to occur at strategic milestones in the process, such as finalizing the Comprehensive plan goals, and reviewing the draft Comprehensive plan.

Project Budget

The following provides the estimated cost for the various scope elements described above.

Phase I – Existing Conditions analysis and Visioning

Task #1 – Establishing the Foundation:	\$18,750
Task #2 – Identifying Existing Patterns	\$15,750
Task #3 – Community Visioning	\$23,450
Task #4 – Defining a Vision and Direction	\$16,400

Phase II – Goal Setting and Implementation Plan

Task #1 – Defining Draft Goals	\$22,500
Task #2 – Refining Goals	\$19,000
Task #3 – Defining Strategies and Actions	\$22,300
Task #4 – Compiling a Plan	\$ 7,500
Task #5 – Defining Priorities	\$18,200

Total Proposed Budget	\$163,850
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Note that to assist in defraying the total cost of undertaking this effort, the Town of Milford could request a fund allocation from the MAPC Technical Assistance Program.

Approach to Outreach & Engagement

Engaging the Community

MAPC's Community Engagement Department is prepared to develop a comprehensive engagement strategy that engages a wide array of constituents in the planning process. The strategy will be created at the very start of the Comprehensive plan process, working collaboratively with Milford and community partners to identify key leverage points in data, community relationships, and communications to establish a well-rounded and inclusive community engagement plan. A goal for the project will be for MAPC to help the Town build relationships with organizations and community members who can be mobilized to enhance outreach and engagement activities and co-create engagement strategies. MAPC will work to ensure that participants gain knowledge and feel heard through the Comprehensive plan engagement activities. The strategy will, at its core, be inclusive, accessible, and innovative. The strategy will seek to engage community members who have traditionally not been active in community planning processes. The strategy will consider accessibility, including interpretation and translation services, if necessary.

The engagement strategy will be designed to include a variety of strategies and creative techniques, including focus groups, large public forums, open houses, interviews, branding, social media, and press. Each engagement opportunity will be strategically designed and placed during the process to provide community members with appropriate opportunities to participate and collect important and meaningful data for the project team. Engagement events will be designed and implemented creatively, pulling from unique and innovative tools such as creative placemaking, interactive digital engagement tools, text campaigns, etc. We often collaborate with community partners on unique events that go beyond the typical public forum, such as outdoor open houses, joint events with other community organizations, pop-up events in the community, etc. Our priority is always meet our partners and community members where they are and to ensure that engagement is as fun and accessible as possible. We look forward to doing this in Milford.

Working with the Planning Board, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and Town Staff

MAPC recommends creating a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee comprised of community members and Town board/ committee members who will be charged with implementing components of the Comprehensive Plan. The Steering Committee should represent diverse perspectives and lived experiences. Ideally, often underrepresented groups like renters, people with lower incomes, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, and others will be represented. Geographic representation is also important. MAPC recommends having more than one Planning Board member serve on the Steering Committee to facilitate collaboration between the two groups.

While the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee will work with MAPC and Town staff to facilitate the planning process, the project will include strategic opportunities to engage the Planning Board and hear feedback on the plan vision, community values, existing conditions, and goals, strategies, and actions, as discussed in the Project Work Plan. Planning Board engagement will be interactive facilitated discussions that pose strategic policy making questions to enrich the conversation. The intention of meeting regularly with the Planning Board is to ensure that when it comes time for the Planning Board to review the completed Comprehensive Plan document, it is not only reflective of the public and Steering Committee but also the Planning Board. This will facilitate plan adoption and a broader commitment to implementation.